

# A SELF-GUIDED WALK THROUGH WYOMING'S HISTORIC DISTRICT

## A Walking Tour

The Wyoming Historical Society welcomes you to this self-guided tour through part of Wyoming's historic "village" district. The district, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in September, 1986, includes more than three hundred buildings in the heart of Wyoming. It has been described by the Ohio Historical Preservation Office as "a one-of-a kind community with an extremely impressive array of architecture."

The origin of Wyoming's transformation from farmland to commuter suburb can be traced to changes in transportation—first the canal, then the railroad, and later the streetcar. The Miami-Erie Canal opened in 1828, followed by the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton Railroad in 1851, then by the streetcar on the Pike in 1900. These changes made Wyoming's attractive country atmosphere increasingly accessible to commuting businessmen to build their homes.

Lovely old trees and wide expanses of green lawns have blended the vertical lines of nineteenth century styles with the more horizontal lines of twentieth century architecture. The community which evolved has special charm and historical significance.

We hope you will enjoy this walk in Wyoming.

(Map located on Page 9)

### **1. Corner of Springfield Pike and Wyoming Avenue**

Three large early farms came together here—the Wilmuth farm lying to the northeast, the Burns Farm to the southeast, and the Riddle farm to the west.

### **2. 507 Springfield Pike, the Riddle-Friend House**

The acreage on which this red brick home stands across from Wyoming Library, was first purchased with land grants of the type issued to Revolutionary War soldiers. The house is near the site of one of the first cabins erected after the “New Road” (now the Pike) was cut through the wilderness in 1806 as a shortcut to Fort Hamilton. The road followed a section line that had been measured off when the Northwest Territory was first surveyed in 1785. At the time Miami and Shawnee Indians still hunted in the area.

Isaac Riddle and his wife built the house in 1835 as a simple farm home. After the railroad was put through, the Riddles began to sell off parcels of their farm land. George Friend, co-owner of Friend & Fox Paper Co. in Lockland bought the house and enlarged it in the popular Italianate style. In the 1920's it was remodeled as a Georgian Revival home, but the center gable roof and tall windows reveal the earlier style.

### **3. The Robert Reily Historical Marker (In front of Wyoming Library)**

The marker is situated on the southwest corner of what was the Thomas Wilmuth farm. The Wilmuths acquired 40 acres here from their relatives the Pendery's, another pioneer family. Mr. Wilmuth died in 1860 at age 100; his second wife Jane Evatt Wilmuth, who married him at 15, also lived to be almost 100. She was present the night in 1861 when Robert Reily called his neighbors together to select the name “Wyoming” for the small rural settlement.

Wyoming was the name of a valley in northeast Pennsylvania, which some of the settlers had known; and Reily is said to have had a preference for names with seven letters. Reily had made a fortune as a Cincinnati merchant and retired early, at 31. He chose the rustic hills of the upper part of Isaac Riddle's farm, overlooking the Mill Creek valley, as the setting for his retirement home.

### **4. 1 Wyoming Avenue**

In the 1880's this was a grocery store owned by a Mr. Jacoby; after him Gus Spreen operated it for many years. The original part of the building can be distinguished from later additions by the simpler early brick work and the limestone lintels over upper story windows. From this spot, once the northwest corner of the Archibald Burns farm, an old mile marker can be seen across the Pike in Centennial Park. Such markers had an important function when the New Road was widened and improved by local farmers in 1834, and toll was charged for its use. Can you tune out the traffic noise of today and imagine the sounds of horse drawn coaches, wagons, and cattle and hogs being driven to market along the dusty road?



### **5. Middle School- Site of original one-room school**

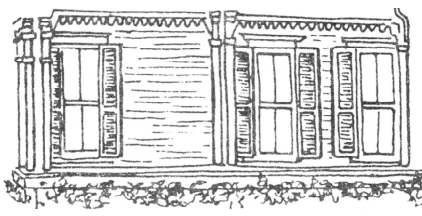
The first school in this area was a simple log cabin. In 1842 a brick school was built here on the grounds of the present Wyoming Middle School. Much of the virgin forest had been cut down by then, and the site was in typical Ohio countryside-fenced farm houses and barns, corn fields meadows marshes, streams, and ponds. Some of the locations for schools and colleges were specified when the Northwest Territory was first opened to settlers.

**6. 129 Wyoming Avenue,  
the Stearns-Compton House (c. 1870)**

This house was built but not occupied by George Stearns who owned both a cotton batting factory and a lumber mill in Lockland. For a better view, walk south along the “Boulevard” (the name Wyomingites gave to the mid-block walkways between two streets) which runs along the side yard. The original Italianate building has had a colonial style porch added, as well as successive additions to the back of the house. The barn, which has nicely scrolled trim, sheltered horses, and hay was stored in the upper loft.

**7. 200 Worthington Avenue**

This Italianate house was built just after the Civil War. Its roof has projecting eaves supported by unusually ornate brackets. Three “coffin” windows, visible from the Boulevard, extend to the floor of its side porch. The term dates back to the days of home funerals when pallbearers wearing tall silk hats would sometimes carry the coffin through windows like these.

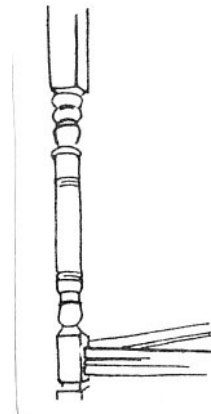


**8. 205 Worthington Avenue,  
the Judson Harmon House**

In 1865 when this house was built as an unpretentious farm house, Worthington was merely a lane bordering fields and pastures. Judson Harmon, one of the former occupants, was the village’s most distinguished public servant. He served as Wyoming’s third Mayor, Judge of the Superior Court in Cincinnati, U.S. Attorney General under William Howard Taft, the Governor of Ohio (1903-13).

**9. 212 Worthington Avenue**

The Townley family built this house in the 1880’s from a popular pattern book design of that period. The same general floor plan can be found in other homes in the district. Features of its Eastlake style, such as the turned posts on the porch

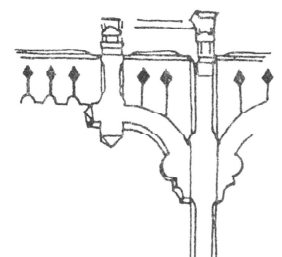


and the panels beside the double windows in the bays, were early examples of mass produced mill work, products of the Industrial Revolution. The Victorians delighted in ornamentation and used contrasting shades of paint to enhance the decorative aspects of their homes. Subsequently many houses were repainted white or another single color.

**10. 218, 226, and 232 Worthington Avenue**

These three “sister” houses were all built in the late 1860’s, before the village was incorporated. The house at the corner looks different only because its porch was removed and a turret added in the late 19th century. The variations between their Italianate brackets, window moldings, and jigsaw fretwork under third floor and veranda roof lines make interesting comparisons.

Older structures like these blend with other 19th century homes and large shade trees to form one of Wyoming’s finest streetscapes. Lewis Worthington, a new York investor who financed the Lockland and Wyoming Improvement Association, could never have envisioned the enduring charm of the avenue named for him.



### **11. Site of the Woodruff Building and Railroad Station**

In the days when residents commuted to Cincinnati on the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton Railroad, this area was the commercial center of the village. The CH&D Station was here as was the Woodruff Building. In the colorful history of the area, the first post office, the first telephone, a livery stable, feed mill, skating rink and a general store were located here.

### **12. The 300 Block of Grove Avenue**

This neighborhood, within easy walking distance of the station, was developed in the 1890's and became more valuable as train service to Cincinnati improved. Several of the houses were built as duplicates. The Queen Anne wrap-around porch and the turret at 323 Grove were installed at the turn of the century to distinguish it from the others.

Note the "built-in" Shingle style porches on the first and second stories of 320 Grove and the rounded Queen Anne window with small colored panes at 302 Grove (on the Cooper Avenue side).

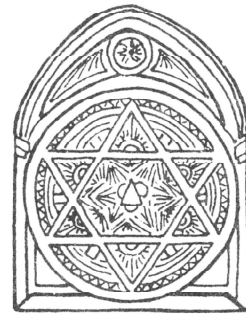
### **13. 233 Burns Avenue**

This simple country home, built in 1865, has two fine coffin windows flanking the front door. Note the unusual tin roofing and decorated center gable.

### **14. Corner of Burns and Waverly Avenues, Wyoming Baptist Church**

This outstanding 19th century church was designed by the noted Cincinnati architect, A.C. Nash. In 1882 John Tangeman, a Reily Road resident and Lockland paper mill owner, donated half the cost of its construction. Dominating the exterior are the graceful slate-covered tower and "Rose Window" with a Star of David pattern. Inside, the pews are of walnut and the wainscoting of red gum.

The building is an important part of Wyoming's heritage and all changes have been sensitively handled so as to maintain its architectural integrity. The congregation is the only one which still worships in its original edifice. A beautiful beech grove known as Baptist Woods once surrounded the church.



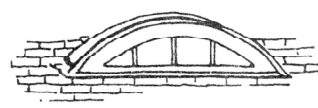
### **15. 159 Burns Avenue**

Despite the conversion of this home to Colonial Revival style in the 1920's, it still shows certain signs of its earlier style—tall windows and strong vertical lines.

A number of other vintage houses are found on this side of the street (formerly the eastern edge of the Burns farm), some "modernized", some looking much as they did in the 1870's when moving to Wyoming meant living in the country. At 107 Burns is a simple but elegant vernacular home which has changed very little.

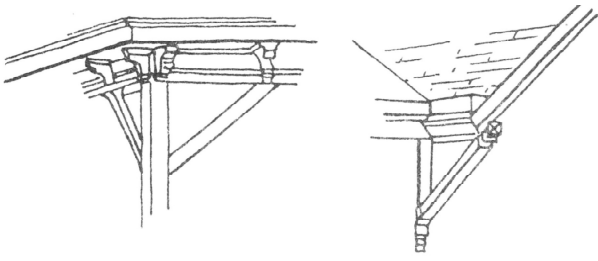
### **16. 30 Burns Avenue (c. 1895)**

This is a Shingle style dwelling with a turret, an arched porch roof and, high up on the roof to the left, an "eyebrow" dormer. Nearby is an old Eastlake carriage house (c. 1880), left standing when "Sunnyside", and earlier home, burned down.



**17. 27 East Mills Avenue (c.1875)**

The house with the wooden “Stick Style” braces connected between the porch and roof is one of the village’s few brick Victorians. Next, turn back to Elm Avenue and enter the area which was Wyoming’s first attempt at zoning, a carefully planned, tightly restricted development which started in 1870. The promoters of this area named several of the winding lanes after native trees.



**18. 50 Elm Avenue,  
the Albert Ault home**

Horse drawn carriages used to clatter up this driveway, unload passengers under the porte cochere, then proceed to the carriage house to be unhitched and put away. The house, built about 1900 by Mr. Ault who was an important Cincinnati industrialist, encases an earlier home constructed by George George in the 1870’s. George built eight of the homes on Elm Avenue, several for members of his family. For his own house at 115 Elm he used material made in his brick yard in Cincinnati.

**19. 204 Elm Avenue**

Here is an example of the 20th century Bungaloid style, which emphasized harmony with nature. Its compact, low sweeping lines and dark textured bricks contrast with the older homes on either side.

**20. 240 Elm Avenue (corner of Walnut)**

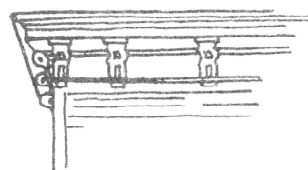
Built by Grant Burroughs, a Cincinnati carriage manufacturer, this home reflects the romantic feeling and exuberance that 19th century owners put into their dwelling places. You are looking at the side of the home; originally a lane leading in from the Pike apparently swung around to the current backyard. Note the complex roof lines of the tower, the profusion of decorative accents, and original leaded glass bays.

Continuing along Walnut, notice the different shapes of wooden shingles, the remaining slate roof, the use of dormers, bay windows, and the variations in chimneys and doorways.

Try to spot traces of old narrow sidewalks leading up driveways or along foundation shrubbery. At 314 Walnut Avenue (corner of Beech), you can see that this home, which was originally Victorian, was later stuccoed and “Tudorized”? At 324 Beech, notice the square tower topped with a finial, and the decorative spindle valance hanging along the porch. The valance was discovered after being hidden for many years while plainer architecture was in vogue.

**21. 105 Stearns Avenue (corner of Beech),  
the Josiah Dwight House (c. 1870, 1900)**

This was the home of the former station agent in charge of the Lockland-Wyoming railroad depot. It is another house which encloses an earlier home. Today its Colonial Revival features include an upper story Palladian window over a large pedimented first story window, a rounded porch with columns, and a matching rounded bay window. Note the dentils under roof lines.



**22. 127 Stearns Avenue,  
the Alfred Stearns House**

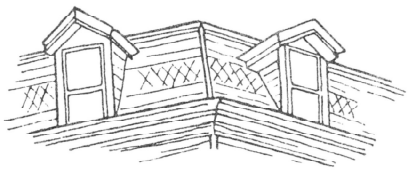
The front door still bears the carved initials “AMS” of the first owner. The house was built around an earlier structure and its façade has been greatly altered, but some of its original foundation stones can be seen, as well as the carriage house in back to the left.

**23. 313 Burns Avenue (Corner of Stearns)  
the Gideon Palmer House**

Set back on a prominent knoll, this impressive 1860’s Italianate house is distinguished by its projecting roof gables, iron balconets, and dominant stone hoodmolds over most of the windows. The classically styled porch and center door were added after the turn of the century. The house remained in the same family for four generations.

**24. 304, 312, and 320 Burns Avenue**

The two sister houses at 304 and 312 Burns are in the Eastlake style. The “imported” front porch at 312 was found in another country on a farm house that was being demolished; its motifs are different from others in this district. It was skillfully attached to replace the original porch which had been removed by previous owners. The house at 320 Burns has a distinctive feature in its mansard roof. Typical of the Second Empire style, this boxed type of roof is rare in Wyoming’s historic district.



**25. 310 Wyoming Avenue,  
the George House House**

Look toward the railroad tracks and across the street (northeast) at this elegant frame home with its enormous oaks. It was built in 1868 by Col. House, a Civil War veteran who co-owned Palmer Bros. & House Flour Mill on the nearby Miami-Erie Canal. It once had a square tower above its front entrance, in the Italian Villa fashion of the day.

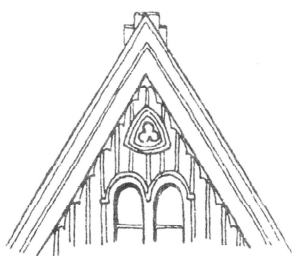
**26. Corner of Burns and Wyoming Avenues,  
the Presbyterian Church**

This church, dedicated in 1890, is the work of Samuel Hannaford, a Cincinnati architect who gained national recognition for designing Music Hall, City Hall, the Chapel at Spring Grove cemetery, and other Cincinnati landmarks. It is constructed of sandstone in the Romanesque Revival style, sometimes called Richardsonian Romanesque after the famous Boston architect who popularized it. Its arched windows and entrances are characteristic of the style. The first church (1870) on the site was similar in style to the manse next door.

**27. 217 Wyoming Avenue,  
the Presbyterian Manse**

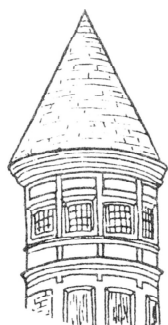
This architectural gem is an example of Wooden Gothic, an American adaptation of the Gothic Revival style which used design elements from castles and cathedrals. This style was popular for country living in 1870, when the founder of the Stearns and Foster Company built this six room house. Vertical lines are emphasized by the board and batten siding. The scallops at the top of the siding gave the illusion of “gingerbread” at the roof line. Small windows with a trifoil pattern are found in the third story gables. A separate kitchen and a wash house in back were eventually connected to the house.

The Presbyterian congregation used it as a parsonage for over 10 years. Additions such as the porch have been made without disturbing the appearance of the building. After many years with a white exterior, the façade has been returned to authentic Victorian colors, chosen to blend with the stone church



**28. 212 Wyoming Avenue,  
the Addison Taylor House**

Across the street stands a fine example of “high style” Queen Anne architecture. The house was a wedding present to the new Mrs. Taylor in the early 1890’s. The contrast of building materials and ornamentation creates a striking visual effect: the first floor is clapboard, the second shingle, and the third stucco with timbered braces! An earlier wooden porch was replaced after the turn of the century by one with a stone foundation, thus adding a fourth texture to the surface. A storybook tower with curved glass windows is a focal point both inside and out. The carriage house to the rear still has a sliding wall which partitioned off the horse stall.



**29. 132 Wyoming Avenue,  
the John Wilmuth Hill House**

This stately home with unusual shiplap siding was built by Mr. Hill in the 1870’s on property that had been part of the farm of his grandfather Wilmuth. Hill was instrumental in building Wyoming’s and Cincinnati’s waterworks. When porches came into vogue, a Colonial Revival porch was wrapped around one corner; its columns are topped with Ionic capitals. A two-story carriage house commands attention at the end of the driveway.

**30. 104 Wyoming Avenue**

This house is an elegant example of the American Four Square style, built in Wyoming just after the return of the century. Note the characteristic hipped roof and symmetrical “boxy” look.

## STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE IN WYOMING

These are some of the distinctive historical styles, their major characteristics, and the dates they were popular here:

### **19TH CENTURY STYLES:**

**ITALIANATE** (1860's and '70's): Ornate brackets under wide overhanging roofs, with decorative moldings above the windows.

**EASTLAKE** (1880's): Design panels, lathe-turned porch posts and spindles which were mass produced. Named after an interior designer, this style was also adapted to home exteriors.

**QUEEN ANNE** (1885-1900): An unusually wide variety of materials was used in each home, often with many gables, a tower or turret, and porches which wrapped around a corner. Often the windows had small panes of colored glass around the perimeter.

**SHINGLE (1890's)**: Wood shingles generally covered the entire exterior. An outgrowth of Queen Anne, but roofs were lower pitched, giving a less vertical look.

**VICTORIAN VERNACULAR**: Simpler buildings whose tall windows, proportions, and regional ornamentation typify the last half of the 19th Century but do not fit into any particular style.

### **20TH CENTURY STYLES:**

**AMERICAN FOUR SQUARE** (1900 to 1910): Characterized by a symmetrical square plan with a hipped roof and simple Colonial detailing. Wood, which had been readily available from nearby Lockland lumber mills, gave way to brick.

**COLONIAL REVIVAL** (1905 to 1930): A nostalgic return to America's roots with simpler, symmetrical and more formal proportions like the 1700's. Porches and entrances displayed classical motifs, and white was the favorite paint choice.

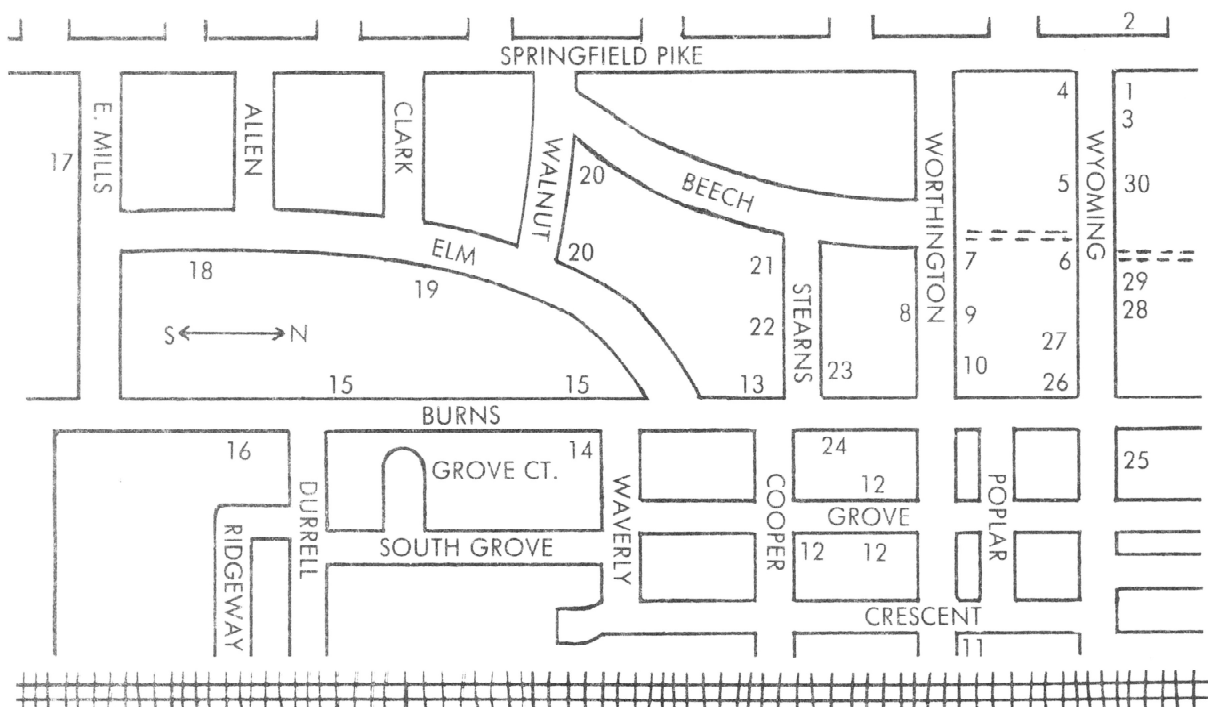
**BUNGALOID** (1910 to 1930): Brick and stucco were popular for bungalow construction and sometimes stone for accent. Low pitched gable roofs and one and a half story height were a complete departure from the vertical look of the previous century.

**TUDOR REVIVAL** (1910 to 1940): Half timbering gave the effect of exposed structural beams between brick, stucco, or stone areas. Unlike the well-balanced Colonial Revivals, their plan was irregular and unsymmetrical. Steep roofs were often slate covered and multipaned windows were often the casement type.



## A WALK THROUGH WYOMING'S HISTORIC "VILLAGE" DISTRICT

The route is a loop which can be walked in approximately an hour. The reference numbers follow the route on the map, although you may start anywhere. Even numbered houses are on the north and east of the streets and odd numbered houses are on the south and west.



A WALK THROUGH WYOMING'S HISTORIC DISTRICT